

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 233

EXDIS

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR YO US
SUBJ: YUGOSLAV ATTITUDE TOWARD PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER

REF: BELGRADE 8320 (1976)

1. SUMMARY: SHAKEN BY PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S FIRST CAMPAIGN STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT SEND TROOPS IN CASE OF SOVIET ATTACK, YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS AND MAN-IN-STREET HAVE BEEN SOMEWAHT REASSURED BY HIS STATMENTS AND ACTIONS SINCE BUT THEY REMAIN UNCERTAIN AND UNEASY. FOR HISTORIC, GEOGRAPHIC AND IDEOLOGICAL REASONS ALWAYS SUSPICIOUS OF THE ATTENTIONS AND INTENTIONS OF BOTH MAJOR POWERS (SEE REFTTEL), THEY ARE PARTICULARLY SUSPICIOUS NOW AS TITO'S END INEVITABLY NEARS. THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CARTER'S OWN ATTITUDE TOWARDS YUGOSLAVIA AND ALSO WORRIED ABOUT MOSCOW'S POSSIBLE PERCEPTION OF HIM AS UNINTERESTED IN YUGOSLAVIA. EVEN WORSE, THEY FEAR THAT SHOULD A POST-TITO INTERNAL CRISIS DEVELOP, BOTH MAJOR POWERS MIGHT JOIN TO DIVIDE YUGOSLAVIA A LA YALTA. DECISIONS IN FIRST FEW MONTHS OF NEW ADMINISTRATION ON BILATERAL MATTERS SUCH AS KRSKO, MILITARY COOPERATION, AND TWA HIJACKERS AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES SUCH AS CSCE, NON-ALIGNMENT AND THE THIRD WORLD, AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS WILL BE
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SCRUTINIZED WITH PARTICULAR CARE. THESE DECISIONS WILL EITHER HEIGHTEN YUGOSLAV SUSPICIONS, OR ALLOW THEM TO BE REPLACED BY CONVICTION THAT NEW PRESIDENT IS MAN WITH UNDERSTANDING OF ASPIRATIONS OF NON-ALIGNED NATIONS, INCLUDING YUGOSLAVIA, WHICH IN TURN COULD DINISH NEED FOR CONFRONTATION WITH U.S., EVEN THOUGH BASIC DIFFERENCES IN OUR SYSTEMS AND WORLD VIEWS WOULD

NOT ALLOW DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR RELATIONS.
END SUMMARY.

2. WITH INWEEKS OF PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S FIRST STATEMENT ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA, BREZHNEV REPORTEDLY BROUGHT NEW SOVIET PRESSURES TO BEAR IN HIS TALKS HERE (WHILE DURING THE VISIT YUGOSLAVS VOLUNTEERED SUSPICIOUSLY OFTEN THAT YUGOSLAVIA'S BARGAINING POSITION HAD NEVER BEEN STRONGER, RECENTLY SEVERAL HAVE SAID THAT CARTER'S STATEMENT HAD UNDERMINED TITO'S POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIETS AND THAT IT LED BREZHNEV TO INCREASE HIS DEMANDS --FOR EXAMPLE PROFESSOR MIHAJLO MARKOVIC SAID KARDELJ'S DOCTOR TOLD HIM THAT THE RUSSIANS USED THE CARTER STATEMENT TO TRY TO SCARE LCY SECRETARY GRILICKOV INTO GIVING IN ON SOVIET INSISTENCE THAT THE YUGOSLAVS MAKE SOME MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE WARSAW PACT). THE CONFLUENCE OF THESE TWO SHOCKS, COMING AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF A YEAR IN WHICH THE "BREZHNEV DOCTRINE" HAD LED IN THEIR EYES TO ATTEMPTS AT TIGHTENING IN BOTH EAST AND WEST EUROPEAN BLOCS, LEFT THE YUGOSLAVS CONCERNED ABOUT PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE "GRAY AREA" OF EUROPE--YUGOSLAVIA. SOME SAID IT COULD NOT BE MERE COINCIDENCE THAT THE BREZHNEV-CARTER "PRESSURES" ON YUGOSLAVIA CAME TOGETHER, THAT "EVERYONE KNOWS SOMETHING MUST HAPPEN WHEN TITO GOES". OF COURSE THIS IS NOT A NEW CONCERN. BUT THEIR DECADES-OLD NIGHTMARE, A YALTA-LIKE 50-50 DIVISION OF YUGOSLAVIA MADE POSSIBLE BY AN EXTERNALLY FUELED INTERNAL CRISIS AMONG THE NATIONALITIES, MOVED ONCE AGAIN TO THE FORE
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OF THEIR CONSCIOUSNESS--AS ILLUSTRATED BY A POST-BREZHNEV VISIT ANTI-SOVIET PRESS CAMPAIGN UNDER SUCH HEADLINES AS "VAMPIRES" AND BY AN UNPRECEDENTED PUBLIC STATEMENT BY LCY SECRETARY BILIC THAT PRESIDENT NIXON PURSUED A POLICY DESIGNED TO "DISINTEGRATE" YUGOSLAVIA. PRESIDENT OF CROATIAN PRESIDENCY BLAZEVIC COMMENTED TO CONGEN KAISER JAN 7 THAT U.S. HAS BEEN PRESSURING YUGOSLAVIA.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 BELGRADE 233

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ONE FSFA OFFICIAL EVEN STATED THAT MANY YUGOSLAVS WERE CONVINCED THAT CARTER HAD COME UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THOSE "CIRCLES" IN THE U.S. WHO THOUGH YUGOSLAVIA WOULD DO LESS DAMAGE TO U.S. INTERESTS PARTICULARLY IN THE THIRD WORLD IF IT RETURNED TO THE SOVIET BLOC AND THAT THEREFORE YUGOSLAVIA WAS EXPENDABLE IN SOME OVERALL DEAL WITH THE SOVIET UNION. ONE REASON FOR THE UNUSUAL HEMORRHAGE OF YUGOSLAV "LEAKS" ABOUT TITO'S SUPPOSED REJECTION OF BREZHNEV'S NINE-TEN DEMANDS APPEARS TO BE TO IMPRESS THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION THAT INITIAL WESTERN PRESS REPORTS ABOUT A WARMING IN SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS WERE WRONG, THAT YUGOSLAVIA DOES NOT WORK FOR SOVIET PURPOSES AMONG THE NON-ALIGNED AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED PART OF THE SOVIET SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

3. PERHAPS IN PART JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR CONCERN ABOUT HIS VIEWS AND A DESIRE NOT TO ALIENATE HIM FURTHER, THE PUBLIC YUGOSLAV REACTION TO CARTER'S INITIAL STATEMENT AND TO HIS SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS HAS BEEN RESTRAINED AND EVEN MODERATELY POSITIVE. THE YUGOSLAV PRESS ASCRIBED THE FIRST STATEMENT TO CARTER'S AVERSION TO GETTING INVOLVED IN MORE VIETNAMS, TO HIS INEXPERIENCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TO THE HEAT OF THE CAMPAIGN. A SENIOR SERBIAN REPUBLIC OFFICIAL AMONG OTHERS NOTED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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GOVERNOR HARRIMAN'S TRIP ALTHOUGH FOLLOWED BY CARTER'S STATEMENT WAS STILL CONSIDERED A GOOD OMEN. AND THEY HAVE REASSURED THEMSELVES TO SOME EXTENT WITH THEIR GENERAL VIEW THAT AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY CHANGES LITTLE BETWEEN REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATIONS.

4. IN FACT WHILE NOT EVEN HOPING FOR DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS (WHICH THEY BELIEVE ARE EXCLUDED BY THE FUNDAMENTAL CAPITALIST AND SUPER-POWER NATURE OF AMERICAN INTERESTS) THEY DO CONSIDER THAT A CARTER ADMINISTRATION COULD BE marginally more understanding of the aspirations of the

WORLD'S SMALLER, DEVELOPING, NON-ALIGNED NATIONS. SOME
HERE HAVE SAID THAT SINCE CARTER HAS SHOWN SENSITIVITY
TO THE NEEDS OF THE POOR IN AMERICA, HE WILL HAVE GREATER
SENSITIVITY TOWARDS THE POORER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.
CARTER'S STATEMENTS THAT THE WORLD SHOULD NOT BE
DOMINATED BY BLOC RELATIONSHIPS AND THAT ALL NATIONS
HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY WERE WELL RECEIVED AS IS HIS SOME-
WHAT LESS HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARDS WESTERN EUROPEAN
COMMUNIST PARTIES. THE APPOINTMENT OF ANDREW YOUNG WAS
ACCLAIMED THOUGH WITH SOME SKEPTICISM ABOUT WHETHER
HIS VIEW WILL PREVAIL. AND VANCE, BRZEZINSKI AND
BLUMENTHAL ARE CONSIDERED marginally BETTER THAN THEIR
PREDECESSORS FROM THE YUGOSLAV PERSPECTIVE AND HAVE
RELIEVED FEAR THAT TOTAL UNKNOWNNS WOULD BE APPOINTED
TO THE SENIOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS JOBS.

5. BUT YUGOSLAV OPINION HAS YET TO FINALLY DECIDE
WHETHER TO COLOR PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER HIMSELF WITH
EITHER A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE HUE. THIS COUPLED
WITH SUCH RECENT TRAUMAS IN US-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS AS
THE TWA HIJACKING, THE UNPROSECUTED BOMBING OF YUGOSLAV
MISSIONS, THE TOTH CASE AND AMBASSADOR SILBERMAN'S SO-CALLED
"PRESSURES" HAVE MADE YUGOSLAVS NERVOUS ABOUT OUR
RELATIONSHIP AND LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE IT --
THOUGH WITH NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT HOW FAR SUCH AN IMPROVE-
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MENT COULD GO AND WITH THE BELIEF THAT THE U.S. NEEDS
TO CHANGE ITS MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL POLICIES MORE
THAN YUGOSLAVIA TO REDUCE SOURCES OF CONFLICT.

6. WITH THAT CAUTION, WE BELIEVE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 BELGRADE 233

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HAS A FRESH AND UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE PRESENT YUGOSLAV MOOD TO GAIN A MARGINAL IMPROVEMENT IN AREAS WHERE THE YUGOSLAVS ARE OF IMPORTANCE TO US, OR OF COURSE TO DEEPEN THEIR DISTRUST AND HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE U.S. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON DECISIONS WE TAKE OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS IN KEY AREAS.

7. FOR EXAMPLE, THE IMPASSE OVER THE LICENSING OF THE KRSKO NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, UNLESS A FORMULA CAN BE FOUND IN NEGOTIATIONS, WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY RESULT IN A PUBLIC AND ENORMOUSLY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE CONFRONTATION WHICH WILL DOMINATE AND SOUR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S RELATIONS NOT ONLY WITH YUGOSLAVIA BUT WITH MANY OTHER NONALIGNED NATIONS OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE IN OUR NON-PROLIFERATION DRIVE. THE YUGOSLAVS ASSERT THAT A CONTRACT IS A CONTRACT AND SEE OUR CHANGING OF THE RULES OF THE GAME AFTER THE PLANT IS HALF BUILT AS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF SUPER-POWER POLICY OF BLACKMAILING WEAKER NATIONS TO MAINTAIN A POWER MONOPOLY -- AS FSFA DIRECTOR FOR NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMENTED TO US RECENTLY. THE FATHER OF NEXT YEAR'S UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT, THEY CANNOT AFFORD TO BE PERCEIVED EITHER BY OTHER NONALIGNED NATIONS OR BY THEIR OWN POLITICIANS AS GIVING IN TO UNILATERAL U.S. DEMANDS. ON THE OTHER
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HAND WE COULD TURN THIS SITUATION INTO A MAJOR ASSET BY USING DIALOGUE ON KRSKO TO GAIN YUGOSLAVIA'S COMMITMENT TO WORK FOR SPECIFIC, STRENGTHENED MULTILATERAL NON-PROLIFERATION AGREEMENTS INCLUDING INCREASED SAFEGUARDS AND TO APPLY SUCH SAFEGUARDS TO ALL FUTURE PLANTS IN YUGOSLAVIA, IN RETURN FOR OUR NOT INSISTING ON APPLYING NEW RULES IN KRSKO ITSELF. BUT WE SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT SIMPLY INSISTING ON ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARDS FOR KRSKO NOT LIKELY GET US FAR. NOT ONLY WILL WE FAIL IN OUR EFFORTS TO SECURE THE GUARANTEES WE SEEK, WE WILL ALSO CREATE FOR OURSELVES A BITTER, VIGOROUS AND ABLE OPPONENT ACROSS THE WHOLE RANGE OF OUR NON-PROLIFERATION OBJECTIVES AND IMMEASURABLY STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF THOSE WHO ARGUE THAT SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE NATIONS MUST DEVELOP THEIR OWN NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AND EVEN WEAPONS IN ORDER TO BREAK THE SUPER-POWER MONOPOLY.

8. OTHER ISSUES WILL ALSO DETERMINE HOW MUCH WE CAN GET FROM EACH OTHER. MILITARY -TO-MILITARY COOPERATION, PERHAPS OUR MOST SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINING YUGOSLAVIA'S STRATEGIC INDEPENDENCE FROM THE SOVIET UNION, AFTER A GOOD HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL START HAS BOGGED DOWN IN BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS AND MUTUAL DISTRUST -- WE NEED A POLICY REVIEW. EMIGRES BASED IN THE UNITED STATES, CONSIDERED BY YUGOSLAVIA ONE OF THE MAJOR THREATS TO ITS NATIONAL UNITY AND SECURITY, HAVE FOR THIRTY YEARS GONE UNPUNISHED FOR A STEADY STREAM OF TERRORIST ACTS -- IF THE TWA HIJACKERS GET OFF ALTOGETHER OR WITH LIGHT SENTENCES SUSPICIONS OF U.S. INTENT TO SPLIT THIS COUNTRY WILL BE STRENGTHENED. FOR THE YUGOSLAVS VIEW THIS AS A MATTER OF POLITICAL WILL RATHER THAN LEGAL PROCESS AND CONSTRAINTS. ON THE MULTILATERAL PLAN THE ADMINISTRATION'S INTEREST IN CSCE AND PARTICULARLY ITS WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER FURTHER CBM AND OTHER MEASURES IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH HOST YUGOSLAVIA ARE IMPORTANT AS THE YUGOSLAVS
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STILL HARBOR SUSPICIONS THAT THE U.S. WANTS TO SCUTTLE CSCE OR USE IT FOR POLEMICS RATHER THAN WORK SERIOUSLY TO OBTAIN THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FINAL ACT. OUR ACTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHERN AFRICA, NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC TALKS AND IN SOVIET-U.S. RELATIONS WILL ALSO BE CRUCIAL IN FORMING YUGOSLAV ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

9. FINALLY, THE YUGOSLAVS BASE MUCH OF THEIR POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING AND INFLUENCE ON PERSONAL CONTACTS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS AND HAVE ALREADY EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN A CARTER VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA. WHILE WE NOT OPPOSED TO THIS IDEA IT HAS THE TRAPPINGS OF A YUGOSLAV EGO TRIP: THE NEW PRESIDENT IS BEING OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PERSONALLY UNDO THE "HARM" CAUSED BY HIS CAMPAIGN REMARKS. WE BELIEVE THAT A VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BY TITO-SUCCESSOR FIGURES KARDELJ OR DOLANC MAY HAVE MORE TO OFFER -- PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER'S EXPRESSED DESIRE TO HAVE FOREIGN LEADERS COME TO U.S. IN 1977.
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